

Cleveland State University
Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs
Department of Urban Studies

UST 493/593

Careers in the Public and Private Sector

Fall 2006

Tuesdays 6:00 p.m. – 8:50 p.m.

UR 247

Credit hours: 3

Instructor: Lisa Thomas
UR 145A
(216) 687-9273
lthomas@urban.csuohio.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description:

The course is designed to provide you with information regarding the breadth and depth of public sector employment and the challenges, opportunities, and rewards available through government sponsored employment. This is a special topics course focusing on the wide variety of careers available in the public and private sector that can be obtained with an urban studies or public administration degree. Additionally, the course will examine private and not-for-profit employment opportunities that are linked to the public sector.

Course Objectives:

The course is designed to meet the following learning objectives:

Knowledge

- Knowing the three levels of government (Federalism)
- Knowing the three branches of government (Separation of powers)

Understanding

- Differences between the public/private sector
- The administrative state and bureaucratic organizations
- Responsibilities associated with public employment
- The increasing role of not-for-profit organizations

Skills

- Learn to create a resume and develop interview skills
- Learning the importance of networking

Values

- Ethical issues involved in public sector employment
- Appreciation of representative democracy

Course Methods:

The course methods include reading, lectures, research, and analysis of current events, guest speakers, class discussion and presentations. Participation in class discussions is strongly encouraged as the diversity of class members' experience is a resource for us to share.

Readings:

A number of articles will make up the reading assignments. Articles will either be distributed in class or made available through electronic course reserve.

Special Needs:

Students with special needs or those who require special accommodations when taking exams or completing projects or meeting any of the class requirements should identify themselves to the instructor so that appropriate arrangements may be made.

Course Requirements:

Course grades will be based on the following criteria:

1) Class preparation and participation 10%

Attendance and participation are important parts of this course. Students are expected to attend class and to be prepared for thoughtful discussion of the assigned readings. If you are unable to attend class, please contact the instructor before the class. You are responsible for obtaining assignments and notes from missed classes.

2) Meeting with Linda Pfaff, Career Coordinator, Career Services Center 20%

CSU and the Levin College maintain full time employees to assist with your job search. Linda Pfaff will help you design your resume and a cover letter for jobs in which you are interested. Additionally, the University can provide assistance with interviewing skills. A Career Fair will be held in November. Students will be responsible for the preparation and submission of a professional resume and cover letter. An individual meeting with Ms. Pfaff is a course requirement.

3) Thought Papers and Current Events Analysis 30%

Throughout the course guests will be invited to speak about their careers in government, the private sector, and the not-for-profit sector. Weekly assignments will also be made to read the daily newspaper, watch Sunday morning national news programs, and follow local elections. Three thought papers, 4 pages each (double spaced, 12 point font), will be assigned during the semester, asking for your opinion on a question posed during class.

4) Final Research Paper 40%

Each student will choose a public policy issue that is relevant to the course, for example, ethics, administrative discretion, budgeting, or human resource management. The topic should be specific to one branch and one level of government. Write a research paper in which you analyze the politics of this issue. Undergraduate students are required to submit a 10-page paper; master's level students are required to submit a 15-page paper. Your paper must contain documentation of your source material from at least five scholarly sources. You may add to this documentation from current events periodicals or web based sources, but the basis of your documentation must come from peer-reviewed literature. APA style is required. **All papers are due Tuesday, December 12th at 6:00 p.m.**

Plagiarism

Any student violating the University's rules regarding plagiarism will be disciplined according to the University Handbook.

Grading

Class Participation	10%
Resume Writing and Career Services Meeting	20%
Thought Papers 3 @10% each	30%
Final Research Paper	40%

Letter grades are based on the following:

95 – 100	A	90 – 94	A-
85 - 89	B+	80 - 84	B
75 - 79	B-	70 – 74	C
Below 70	F		

Late assignments will receive 3 less points for each day the assignment is late.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all classes as reading assignments will be made and guests will be presented. All cell phones and pagers must be turned off during the class period. If you are unable to attend class, please contact one of the instructors prior to class. Beverages are acceptable during class; food and chewing gum are not acceptable.

University Policy:

Refer to the CSU web site for procedures relative to adding/dropping a class, withdrawal from the course, S/U grading, and incomplete procedures.

The last date to drop this course and not have it appear on your transcript is Friday, September 8, 2005. The last day to drop the course with a W on your transcript is Friday, November 3rd.

Class Schedule:

Week 1 August 29: Introductions, overview of course, review syllabus.

Week 2 September 5: Federalism, the three levels of government.
September 7: Mentoring program at 5:00 p.m.

Week 3 September 12: Separation of Powers, three branches of government.
Thought paper assigned

Week 4 September 19: Career Services, Linda Pfaff, guest speaker
Brief overview of public administration – discipline or profession? What does an Urban Studies degree mean?
First thought paper due

Week 5 September 26: Examining careers within the Executive Branch

Week 6 October 3: Examining careers within the Executive Branch
Thought paper assigned

Week 7 October 10: Examining careers within the Legislative Branch
Second thought paper due

Week 8 October 17: Examining careers within the Legislative Branch

Week 9 October 24: Examining careers within the Judiciary

Week 10 October 31: Examining careers within the Judiciary
Careers in Government Seminar
CSU Career Fair first week of November
Resume and Cover letter due

Week 11 November 7: **VOTE!** Networking, campaigning, and internships
Examining careers in the not-for-profit sector
Thought paper assigned

Week 12 November 14: Review election results, discussion of the Civil Service
Examining careers in the private sector
Third thought paper due

Week 13 November 21: Examining alternative careers
Non-governmental organizations (NGO'S)
Peace Corps
United Nations

Week 14 November 28: Ethics: altruism or what's in it for me?

Week 15 December 5: Final wrap-up and presentations by graduate students.

Final Exam Week December 12: ***Final paper due, 6:00 p.m.***

Guidelines for Final Research Paper

Format: The paper must be written in the American Psychological Association (APA) style. For questions regarding APA, purchase a style manual or look at webster.comment.edu/apa/ for assistance. There are other APA style pages available through GOOGLE. Please double space your paper using a simple type font (Arial, Tahoma, or Courier are examples), 12-point type, and a one-inch margin around the text. Make certain to number your pages and use paragraphs rather than spaces to separate groups of sentences. You may use headings, providing they are germane to the topic.

Topic: The purpose of the course is to introduce the student to the breadth of careers available through public service. The focus is on careers, not just a job. Public employment has both risks and rewards. Decisions are frequently made by asking the question – “how will this decision look on the front page of the morning newspaper?” Public administrators are keepers of the public trust and take an oath of office to follow the rule of law. Students will be asked to examine a public policy area of interest – ethics, human resource management, separation of powers, or administrative discretion as examples – and focus that public policy within one level of government – federal, state or local. As we move through the course, think of a problem that you would like to investigate. Be creative in your thinking as the whole system of democratic government is open for your review.

Literature search: An educated person is not one who knows all the answers, but rather one who knows where to search for them. The library is replete with peer reviewed journal articles that reflect serious scholarly research on topics that we will discuss. There are journals related to public administration, public management, human resource management, budgeting and finance, economic development, ethics, and many more. Your final paper must contain at least 5 references from peer-reviewed journals that you have found through your own research. You must discuss each article in your paper and tie it to the topic under discussion. You may also use reference books, encyclopedias, web

based information and current periodicals, however, these will not count toward the 5 peer reviewed articles. The more references you have, the easier it is to reach the 10 or 15 page requirement. Remember to use APA style when quoting another author. Journal articles we use in class will contain many references that you may use to begin your scholarly research. The CSU librarians are a fabulous resource, and are themselves an example of a career within the public sector.

Mechanics: As in all things, the presentation is important. Spelling errors, syntax errors, and faulty grammar will count against the student. It is imperative to proofread your work before turning it in. This is one lesson you will use throughout your career.

Final thought: We can't float through life – we must fix our gaze on a guiding star and keep our hands on the plough. It is the consistency of the pursuit that gives you the constancy, that gives you encouragement, that gives you the way to understand. ..why it is important for you to do what you can do.

Ossie Davis